

# FACTS AND MEN

BEING PAGES FROM

ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY,  
BETWEEN 1553 AND 1683.

WITH A PREFACE FOR THE TIMES.

BY

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*“Expository Thoughts on the Gospels” “Knots Untied.” etc.*

WILLIAM HUNT AND COMPANY,  
12, PATERNOSTER ROW.  
IPSWICH: WILLIAM HUNT, TAVERN STREET.

1882.

# NICHOLAS RIDLEY: BISHOP AND MARTYR.

## HIS LIFE, TIMES, AND WRITINGS.

NICHOLAS RIDLEY, Bishop and Martyr, is a man whose name ought to be a household word among all truehearted English Churchmen. In the noble army of English Reformers, no one deserves a higher place than Ridley. Together with Cranmer, Latimer, and Hooper, he occupies the first rank among the worthies of our blessed Reformation, and in point of real merit is second to none. Ridley was born about the year 1500, at Willymontswick, in Northumberland, not far from the Scottish border. His early education was received at a school at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and in the year 1518 he was removed to Pembroke College, Cambridge. Here he soon became distinguished as a student of uncommon diligence and ability, and rapidly rose to a prominent position in the University. He became Fellow of Pembroke in 1524, Senior Proctor in 1533, Chaplain to the University and Public Orator in 1534, and Master of Pembroke in 1540.

The beginnings of Ridley's decided Protestantism are wrapped in some obscurity. Like Cranmer, he seems to have worked his way gradually into the full light of Scriptural truth, and not to have attained full maturity of soundness in faith at once. He signed the decree against the Pope's supremacy in 1534. In 1537 he became Chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer, and was appointed by him to the Vicarage of Herne, in East Kent, in 1538. Here, in the retirement of a quiet country parsonage, he first read the famous treatise of Ratram, or Bertram, about the Lord's Supper, and was led by it to search the Scriptures, and examine more carefully than before the writings of the Fathers. The result was, that he began to entertain grave doubts of the truth of the Romish doctrine about the Lord's Supper. These doubts he communicated to his friend and patron the Archbishop. The final event was the conviction of both Cranmer and Ridley that the received tenet of transubstantiation was unscriptural, novel, and erroneous. It was not, however, till the year 1545 that Ridley completely renounced the doctrine of the corporal presence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament. About that time, the arguments and sufferings of Frith, Lambert, and others, confirmed the impressions received at Herne, and he unhesitatingly embraced the doctrine of the Lord's Supper as now held in the Church of England, and never swerved from it till his death.

In 1540 Ridley became Chaplain to Henry VIII., and then rose from office to office of dignity and influence with rapid steps. In 1541 he was made Prebendary of Canterbury, and in 1545 Prebendary of Westminster. In 1547 he was appointed Vicar of Soham, and in the same year was nominated Bishop of Rochester by Henry VIII. In 1550 he was made Bishop of London by Edward VI., and in 1553 was nominated Bishop of Durham. This last change of position, however, never took place. The lamented death of the young King Edward put a complete stop to Ridley's earthly honours. In 1553 he was excepted by name from the amnesty by Bloody Queen Mary, who had a special dislike to him, and

was committed to the Tower.

The circumstances under which Ridley came into direct collision with Queen Mary before the death of Edward the Sixth are so graphically described by Fox that I think it best to give them in the Martyrologist's own words:—

“About the eighth of September, 1552, Dr. Ridley, then Bishop of London, lying at his house at Hadham in Herts, went to visit the Lady Mary, then lying at Hunsden, two miles off, and was gently entertained of Sir Thomas Wharton and other her officers, till it was almost eleven of the clock, about which time the said Lady Mary came forth into her chamber of presence, and then the said Bishop there saluted her Grace, and said that he was come to do this duty to her Grace. Then she thanked him for his pains, and for a quarter of an hour talked with him very pleasantly, and said that she knew him in the court when he was chaplain to her father, and could well remember a sermon that he made before King Henry her father at the marriage of my Lady Clinton that now is to Sir Anthony Browne, &c., and so dismissed him to dine with her officers. After the dinner was done, the Bishop being called for by the said Lady Mary, resorted again to her Grace, between whom this communication was. First the Bishop beginneth in manner as followeth. ‘Madam, I came not only to do my duty to see your Grace, but also to offer myself to preach before you on Sunday next, if it will please you to hear me.’

“At this her countenance changed, and after silence for a space, she answered thus: ‘My Lord, as for this last matter, I pray you make the answer to it yourself.’

“*Ridley*.—‘Madam, considering mine office and calling, I am bound to make your Grace this offer to preach before you.’

“*Mary*.—‘Well, I pray you, make the answer, as I have said, to this matter yourself, for you know the answer well enough; but if there be no remedy, but I must make you answer, this shall be your answer, the door of the parish church adjoining shall be open for you, if you come, and ye may preach if you list, but neither I nor any of mine shall hear you.’

“*Ridley*.—‘Madam, I trust you will not refuse God's Word.’

“*Mary*.—‘I cannot tell what ye call God's Word—that is not God's Word now, that was God's Word in my father's days.’

“*Ridley*.—‘God's Word is one at all times, but hath been better understood and practised in some ages than in other.’

“*Mary*.—‘You durst not for your ears have avouched that for God's Word in my father's days that now you do; and as for your new books, I thank God, I never read any of them, I never did nor ever will do.’

“And after many bitter words against the form of religion then established, and against the government of the realm, and the laws made in the young years of her brother, which she said she was not bound to obey till her brother came to perfect age, and then she said she would obey them; she asked the Bishop whether he were one of the council? He answered, ‘No.’ ‘You might well enough,’ said she, ‘as the council goeth now-a-days.’ And so she concluded

with these words: ‘My Lord, for your gentleness to come and see me I thank you, but for your offering to preach before me I thank you never a whit.’

“Then the said Bishop was brought by Sir Thomas Wharton to the place where they had dined, and was desired to drink, and after he had drunk, he paused awhile, looking very sadly, and suddenly brake out into these words,— ‘Surely I have done amiss.’ ‘Why so?’ quoth Sir Thomas Wharton. ‘For I have drunk,’ said he, ‘in that place where God’s Word offered hath been refused, whereas if I had remembered my duty, I ought to have departed immediately, and to have shaken off the dust of my shoes for a testimony against this house.’ These words were by the said Bishop spoken with such a vehemency, that some of the hearers afterward confessed their hair to stand upright on their heads. This done, the said Bishop departed, and so returned to his house.”

From the Tower Ridley was sent to Oxford in 1554, to be baited and insulted in a mock disputation; and finally, after two years’ imprisonment, was burned at Oxford with old Latimer, on October 16th, 1555. Singularly enough, he seems to have had forebodings of the kind of death he would die. Humphrey, in his “Life of Jewel,” records the following anecdote:—“Ridley, on one occasion, being tossed about in a great storm, exhorted his terrified companions with these words, ‘Be of good cheer, and bend to your oars; this boat carries a Bishop who is not to be drowned, but burned.’”

From the day that Ridley became a Bishop, he appears to have been wholly absorbed in assisting Archbishop Cranmer to establish and consolidate the Reformation of the Church of England. For this huge and formidable work he was peculiarly well fitted by his acknowledged learning. To no one, perhaps, of the Reformers are we more indebted for our admirable Articles and Liturgy, than to Ridley. Altered and somewhat improved, as they undoubtedly were in Queen Elizabeth’s time, we must never forget that in their rudimentary form they first received shape and consistency from the Edwardian Reformers; and that of the Edwardian Reformers, no one probably did a greater portion of the work than Bishop Ridley. In fact, the importance of his work in the English Reformation may be gathered from the saying of one of his most distinguished adversaries: “Latimer leaneth to Cranmer, Cranmer leaneth to Ridley, and Ridley leaneth to his own singular wit.” No one, certainly, seems to have had more influence over the mind of Edward VI. than Ridley. It was owing to his suggestion that the noble-minded young King founded no less than sixteen grammar schools, including Christ’s Hospital; and designed, if his life had been spared, to erect twelve colleges for the education of youths. Besides this, the noble institution of St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, in Smithfield, was first endowed and called into existence by Ridley’s advice to the King.

The account given by Mr. Christmas, in his biography prefixed to Ridley’s works, of the circumstances under which Edward the Sixth founded St. Bartholomew’s Hospital is so interesting that I shall give it in its entirety:—

“A remarkable instance of the beneficial effect of Ridley’s counsels is to be seen in the foundation of three institutions in the reign of Edward VI, and which

in point of date may be called the first fruits of the Reformation. Both in the council chamber and the pulpit did this eminent prelate resist the sacrilegious spirit of his day; and though the young King was but partially able to resist the tide of corruption, he yet founded, at the suggestion of Ridley, no less than sixteen grammar schools, and designed, had his life been spared, to erect twelve colleges for the education of youth. Shortly before his death he sent for the Bishop, and thanking him for a sermon in which he strongly pressed the duty of providing for the poverty and ignorance of our fellow-men, added: 'I took myself to be especially touched by your speech, as well in regard of the abilities God hath given me, as in regard of the example which from me He will require; for as in the kingdom I am next under God, so must I most nearly approach Him in goodness and mercy; for as our miseries stand most in need of aid from Him, so are we the greatest debtors—debtors to all that are miserable, and shall be the greatest accountants of our dispensation therein; and therefore, my Lord, as you have given me, I thank you, this general exhortation, so direct me (I pray you) by what particular actions I may this way best discharge my duty.' The Bishop, who was not prepared for such a request, begged time to consider, and to consult with those who were more conversant with the condition of the poor. Having taken the advice of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, he shortly returned to the King, representing that there appeared to be three different classes of poor. Some were poor by impotency of nature, as young fatherless children, old decrepit persons, idiots, cripples, and such like, these required to be educated and maintained; for them accordingly the King gave up the Grey Friars' Church, near Newgate Market, now called Christ's Hospital. Other he observed were poor by faculty, as wounded soldiers, diseased and sick persons who required to be cured and relieved, for their use the King gave St. Bartholomew's, near Smithfield; the third sort were poor by idleness or unthriftiness, as vagabonds, loiterers, &c., who should be chastised and reduced to good order; for these the King appointed his house at Bridewell, the ancient mansion of many English Kings."

The inner life and habits of Ridley, during the brief period of his episcopate, are so beautifully described by Fox in his "Acts and Monuments" that I make no excuse for giving the passage in its entirety :—

"In his calling and office he so travelled and occupied himself by preaching and teaching the true and wholesome doctrine of Christ, that never good child was more singularly loved of his dear parents than he of his flock and diocese. Every holiday and Sunday he preached in some one place or other, except he were otherwise letted by weighty affairs and business. To whose sermons the people resorted, swarming about him like bees, and coveting the sweet flowers and wholesome juice of the fruitful doctrine, which he did not only preach, but showed the same by his life, as a glittering lantern to the eyes and senses of the blind, in such pure order and chastity of life (declining from evil desires and concupiscences), that even his very enemies could not reprove him in any one

iota thereof,

“Besides this, he was passingly well learned. His memory was great, and he of such reading withal, that of right he deserved to be comparable to the best of this our age, as can testify as well divers his notable works, pithy sermons, and sundry disputations in both the Universities, as also his very adversaries, all which will say no less themselves.

“Besides all this, he was wise of counsel, deep of wit, and very politic in all his doings. How merciful and careful he was to reduce the obstinate Papists from their erroneous opinions, and by gentleness to win them to the truth, his gentle ordering and courteous handling of Doctor Heath, late Archbishop of York, being prisoner with him in King Edward’s time in his house one year, sufficiently declareth. In fine, he was such a prelate, and in all points so good, godly, and ghostly a man, that England may justly rue the loss of so worthy a treasure. And thus hitherto concerning these public matters.

“Now will I speak something further particularly of his person and conditions. He was a man right comely and well-proportioned in all points, both in complexion and lineaments of the body. He took all things in good part, bearing no malice nor rancour from his heart, but straightways forgetting all injuries and offences done against him. He was very kind and natural to his kinsfolk, and yet not bearing with them anything otherwise than right would require, giving them always for a general rule (yea, to his own brother and sister) that they doing evil, should seek or look for nothing at his hand, but should be as strangers and aliens unto him, and they to be his brother or sister which used honesty and a godly trade of life.

“He, using all kinds of ways to mortify himself, was given to much prayer and contemplation; for duly every morning, so soon as his apparel was done upon him, he went forthwith to his bed-chamber, and there upon his knees prayed the space of half-an-hour, which being done, immediately he went to his study (if there came no other business to interrupt him), where he continued till ten of the clock, and then came to common prayer, daily used in his house. The prayers being done he went to dinner, where he used little talk, except otherwise occasion by some had been ministered, and then it was sober, discreet, and wise, and sometimes merry, as cause required.

“The dinner done, which was not very long, he used to sit an hour or thereabouts talking or playing at chess. That done, he returned to his study, and there would continue, except suitors or business abroad were occasion of the contrary, until five of the clock at night, and then would come to common prayer, as in the forenoon, which being finished he went to supper, behaving himself there as at his dinner before. After supper recreating himself in playing at chess the space of an hour, he would then return again to his study; continuing there till eleven of the clock at night, which was his common hour to go to bed, then saying his prayers upon his knees, as in the morning when he rose. Being at his manor of Fulham, as divers times he used to be, he read daily a lecture to his

family at the common prayer, beginning at the Acts of the Apostles, and so going throughout all the Epistles of St. Paul, giving to every man that could read a New Testament, hiring them besides with money to learn by heart certain principal chapters, but especially the thirteenth chapter of the Acts; reading also unto his household oftentimes the one hundred and first Psalm, being marvellous careful over his family, that they might be a spectacle of all virtue and honesty to other. To be short, he was as godly and virtuous himself, so nothing but virtue and godliness reigned in his house, feeding them with the food of our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

“Now remaineth a word or two to be declared of his gentle nature and kindly pity in the usage of an old woman called Mistress Bonner, mother to Doctor Bonner, sometime Bishop of London: which I thought good to touch, as well for the rare clemency of Doctor Ridley, as the unworthy immanity and ungrateful disposition again of Doctor Bonner. Bishop Ridley, being at his manor of Fulham, always sent for the said Mistress Bonner, dwelling in an house adjoining to his house, to dinner and supper, with one Mistress Mungey, Bonner’s sister, saying, ‘Go for my mother Bonner;’ who coming, was ever placed in the chair at the table’s end, being so gently entreated, welcomed, and taken, as though he had been born of her own body, being never displaced of her seat, although the King’s council had been present, saying, when any of them were there (as divers times they were), ‘By your lordships’ favour, this place of right and custom is for my mother Bonner.’ But how well he was recompensed for this his singular gentleness and pitiful pity after at the hands of the said Doctor Bonner, almost the least child that goeth by the ground can declare. For who afterward was more enemy to Ridley than Bonner and his? Who more went about to seek his destruction than he, recompensing his gentleness with extreme cruelty? As well appeared by the strait handling of Ridley’s own natural sister, and George Shipside, her husband, from time to time. The gentleness of Ridley did suffer Bonner’s mother, sister, and other his kindred, not only quietly to enjoy all that which they had of Bonner, but also entertained them in his house, showing much courtesy and friendship daily unto them. On the other side Bishop Bonner, being restored again, would not suffer the brother and natural sister of Bishop Ridley, and other his friends, not only not to enjoy that which they had by the said their brother Bishop Ridley, but also curiously, without all order of law or honesty, by extort power wrested from them all the livings they had.

“And yet being not therewith satisfied, he sought all the means he could to work the death of the aforesaid Shipside, saying that he would make twelve godfathers to go upon him; which had been brought to pass indeed, at what time he was prisoner at Oxford, had not God otherwise wrought his deliverance by means of Doctor Heath, Bishop then of Worcester.

“Whereby all good indifferent readers notoriously have to understand, what great diversity was in the disposition of these two natures. Whereof as the one

excelled in mercy and pity, so the other again as much or more excelled in churlish ingratitude and despicable disdain. But of this matter enough.”

The closing scene of Ridley’s life, his famous martyrdom, on October 16th, 1555, is described with such touching and masterly simplicity by Fox, that I think it best to let my readers have it in the Martyrologist’s own words:—

“Upon the north side of the town of Oxford, in the ditch over against Balliol College, the place of execution was appointed; and for fear of any tumult that might arise, to let the burning of them, the lord Williams was commanded, by the Queen’s letters, and the householders of the city to be there, assistant, sufficiently appointed. And when everything was in a readiness, the prisoners were brought forth by the mayor and the bailiffs.

“Master Ridley had a fair black gown furred, and faced with foins, such as he was wont to wear, being Bishop, and tippet of velvet furred likewise about his neck, a velvet nightcap upon his head, and a corner cap upon the same, going in a pair of slippers to the stake, and going between the mayor and an alderman.

“After him came Master Latimer, in a poor Bristol frieze frock, all worn, with his buttoned cap, and a kerchief on his head, all ready to the fire, a new long shroud hanging over his hose down to the feet. All this at the first sight stirred men’s hearts to rue upon them, beholding on the one side the honour they sometime had, and on the other the calamity whereunto they were fallen.

“Then Master Ridley, looking back, espied Master Latimer coming after, unto whom he said, ‘Oh, be ye there?’ ‘Yea,’ said Master Latimer, ‘I have after you as fast as I can follow.’ So he following a pretty way off, at length they came both to the stake, the one after the other; where first Dr. Ridley entering the place, marvellous earnestly holding up both his hands, looked towards heaven. Then shortly after espying Master Latimer, with a wondrous cheerful look he ran to him, embraced and kissed him; and, as they that stood near reported, comforted him, saying, ‘Be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it.’

“With that went he to the stake, kneeled down by it, kissed it, and effectually prayed; and behind him Master Latimer kneeled, as earnestly calling upon God as he. After they arose the one talked with the other a little, while they which were appointed to see the execution removed themselves out of the sun. What they said I can learn of no man.

“After a sermon by a renegade preacher named Smith, which they were not allowed to answer, they were commanded to make them ready, which they with all meekness obeyed. Master Ridley took his gown and his tippet, and gave it to his brother-in-law Master Shipside, who all his time of imprisonment, although he might not be suffered to come to him, lay there at his own charges to provide him necessaries, which, from time to time, he sent by the sergeant that kept him. Some other of his apparel that was little worth he gave away; other the bailiffs took.

“He gave away besides divers other small things to gentlemen standing by, and divers of them pitifully weeping. As to Sir Henry Lea he gave a new groat;



and to divers of my lord Williams' gentlemen some napkins, some nutmegs, and rases of ginger; his dial, and such other things as he had about him, to everyone that stood next him. Some plucked the points off his hose. Happy was he that might get any rag of him.

"Master Latimer gave nothing, but quietly suffered his keeper to pull off his hose and his other array, which to look unto was very simple; and being stripped unto his shroud, he seemed as comely a person to them that were there present, as one should lightly see; and whereas in his clothes he appeared a withered and crooked silly old man, he now stood bolt upright, as comely a father as one might lightly behold.

"Then Master Ridley, standing as yet in his truss, said to his brother, 'It were best for me to go in my truss still.' 'No,' quoth his brother, 'it will put you to more pain; and the truss will do a poor man good.' Whereunto Master Ridley said, 'Be it so, in the name of God;' and so unlaced himself. Then, being in his shirt, he stood upon the aforesaid stone, and held up his hand and said, 'O heavenly Father, I give unto Thee most hearty thanks, for that Thou hast called me to be a professor of Thee, even unto death. I beseech Thee, Lord God, take mercy upon this realm of England, and deliver the same from all her enemies.'

"Then the smith took a chain of iron, and brought the same about both Dr. Ridley's and Master Latimer's middle: and as he was knocking in a staple, Dr. Ridley took the chain in his hand, and shook the same, for it did gird in his belly, and looking aside to the smith said, 'Good fellow, knock it in hard, for the flesh will have his course.' Then his brother did bring him gunpowder in a bag, and would have tied the same about his neck. Master Ridley asked what it was. His brother said, 'Gunpowder.' 'Then,' said he, 'I will take it to be sent of God; therefore I will receive it as sent of Him. And have you any.' said he, 'for my brother?' meaning Master Latimer. 'Yea, sir, that I have.' quoth his brother. 'Then give it unto him.' said he, 'betime; lest ye come too late.' So his brother went, and carried of the same gunpowder unto Master Latimer.

"Then they brought a faggot, kindled with fire, and laid the same down at Dr. Ridley's feet. To whom Master Latimer spake in this manner: 'BE OF GOOD COMFORT, MASTER RIDLEY, AND PLAY THE MAN. WE SHALL THIS DAY LIGHT SUCH A CANDLE, BY GOD'S GRACE, IN ENGLAND, AS I TRUST SHALL NEVER BE PUT OUT.'

"And so the fire being given unto them, when Dr. Ridley saw the fire flaming up towards him, he cried with a wonderful loud voice, '*In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum: Domine, recipe spiritum meum.*' [*Into your hands I commend my spirit: Lord, receive my spirit.*] And after, repeated this latter part often in English, 'Lord, Lord, receive my spirit;' Master Latimer crying as vehemently on the other side, 'O Father of Heaven, receive my soul!' who received the flame, as it were embracing of it.

"After that he had stroked his face with his hand, and as it were bathed them a little in the fire, he soon died (as it appeared), with very little pain or none.

And thus much concerning the end of this old and blessed servant of God, Master Latimer, for whose laborious travails, fruitful life, and constant death, the whole realm hath cause to give great thanks to Almighty God.

“But Master Ridley, by reason of the evil making of the fire unto him, because the wooden faggots were laid about the gorse, and overhigh built, the fire burned first beneath, being kept down by the wood; which when he felt, he desired them for Christ’s sake to let the fire come unto him. Which when his brother-in-law heard, but not well understood, intending to rid him out of his pain (for the which cause he gave attendance), as one in such sorrow not well advised what he did, he heaped faggots upon him, so that he clean covered him, which made the fire more vehement beneath, that it burned clean all his nether parts before it touched the upper; and that made him leap up and down under the faggots, and often desire them to let the fire come unto him, saying, ‘I cannot burn.’ Which indeed appeared well; for after his legs were consumed, by reason of his struggling through the pain (whereof he had no release but only his contentation in God) he showed that side towards us clean, shirt and all untouched with flame. Yet in all this torment he forgot not to call unto God still, having in his mouth, ‘Lord, have mercy upon me,’ intermingling his cry. ‘Let the fire come unto me, I cannot burn.’ In which pangs he laboured till one of the standers by with his bill pulled off the faggots above, and where he saw the fire flame up, he wrested himself unto that side. And when the flame touched the gunpowder, he was seen to stir no more, but burned on the other side, falling down at Master Latimer’s feet; which, some said, happened by reason that the chain loosed; others said, that he fell over the chain by reason of the poise of his body, and the weakness of the nether limbs.

“Some said, that before he was like to fall from the stake, he desired them to hold him to it with their bills. However it was, surely it moved hundreds to tears, in beholding the horrible sight; for I think there was none, that had not clean exiled all humanity and mercy, which would not have lamented to behold the fury of the fire so to rage upon their bodies. Signs there were of sorrow on every side. Some took it grievously to see their deaths, whose lives they held full dear; some pitied their persons, that thought their souls had no need thereof. His brother moved many men, seeing his miserable case, seeing (I say) him compelled to such infelicity, that he thought then to do him best service when he hastened his end. Some cried out of the fortune, to see his endeavour (who most dearly loved him, and sought his release) turn to his greater vexation and increase of pain. But whoso considered their preferments in time past, the places of honour that they some time occupied in this Commonwealth, the favour they were in with their princes, and the opinion of learning they had in the University where they studied, could not choose, but sorrow with tears, to see so great dignity, honour, and estimation, so necessary members some time accounted, so many godly virtues, the study of so many years, such excellent learning, to be put into the fire, and consumed in one moment. Well: dead they are and the reward of this world they have already. What reward remaineth for them in

heaven, the day of the Lord's glory, when He cometh with His saints, shall shortly, I trust, declare."

It only remains now to give some account of Ridley's writings. They are few in number, and occupy only one volume of the Parker Society's series. They consist chiefly of short treatises against transubstantiation and image-worship; conferences with Latimer and Bourne; a disputation held in 1549, about the sacrament; disputations and examination at Oxford, held shortly before his martyrdom; injunctions to the diocese of London; and thirty-five letters, chiefly written during his imprisonments. Scanty as these literary remains are from so great a divine, they are worthy of his pen, and make us wish he had written more. But, doubtless, the worthy Bishop had little time for writing. To work, and preach, and advise, and witness, and suffer, and die for God's truth, was his appointed lot. And who shall dare to say that his short life and glorious death have not done more for Christ's truth in England than fifty folio volumes of writings?

I venture to think that the following extracts from Ridley's writings will be found interesting.

(1) My first extract shall be taken from Ridley's Conference with Latimer (Parker Society's edition, p. 145):—

"In Tynedale, where I was born, not far from the Scottish borders, I have known my countrymen watch night and day in their harness, such as they had, that is, in their jacks, and their spears in their hands (you call them northern gads), especially when they had any privy warning of the coming of the Scots. And so doing, although at every such bickering some of them spent their lives, yet by such means, like pretty men, they defended their country. And those that so died, I think, that before God, they died in a good quarrel, and their offspring and progeny all the country loved them the better for their fathers' sake.

"And in the quarrel of Christ our Saviour, in the defence of His own Divine ordinances, by the which He giveth unto us life and immortality, yea, in the quarrel of faith and Christian religion, wherein resteth our everlasting salvation, shall we not watch? Shall we not go always armed, ever looking when our adversary (which, like a roaring lion, seeketh whom he may devour) shall come upon us by reason of our slothfulness? Yea, and woe be unto us, if he can oppress us at unawares, which undoubtedly he will do, if he find us sleeping. Let us awake therefore; for if the good man of the house knew what hour the thief would come, he would surely watch and not suffer his house to be broken up. Let us awake therefore, I say, and let us not suffer our house to be broken up. 'Resist the devil,' says St. James, 'and he will fly from you.' Let us therefore resist him manfully, and, taking the cross upon our shoulders, let us follow our Captain Christ, who by His own blood hath dedicated and hallowed the way, which leadeth unto the Father, that is, to the light which no man can attain—the fountain of everlasting joys. Let us follow, I say, whither He calleth and allureth us, that after these afflictions, which last but for a moment whereby He trieth our faith, as gold by the fire, we may everlastingly reign and triumph with Him

in the glory of the Father, and that through the same our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen. Amen.”

(2) My second extract shall be taken from Ridley’s Injunctions to the Diocese of London, given in the year 1550. (Parker’s Society’s edition, p. 319):—

“It is enjoined, that no minister do counterfeit the Popish Mass in kissing the Lord’s board; washing his hands or fingers after the Gospel, or on the receipt of the Holy Communion; shifting the book from one place to another; laying down and licking the chalice after the Communion; blessing his eyes with the sudarie thereof, or paten, or crossing his head with the same, holding his fore-fingers and thumbs joined together toward the temples of his head, after the receiving of the Sacrament; breathing on the bread, or chalice; saying the Agnus before the Communion; showing the Sacrament openly before the distribution, or making any elevation thereof: ringing of the sacring bell, or setting any light upon the Lord’s board. And finally, that the minister, in the time of the Holy Communion, do use only the ceremonies and gestures appointed by the Book of Common Prayer, and none other, so that there do not appear in them any counterfeiting of the Popish Mass.

“And whereas in divers places some use the Lord’s board after the form of a table, and some of an altar, whereby dissention is perceived to arise among the unlearned; therefore, wishing a godly unity to be observed in all our diocese, and for that the form of a table may more move and turn the simple from the old superstitious opinions of the Popish Mass and to the right use of the Lord’s Supper, we exhort the curates, churchwardens, and questmen, here present, to erect and set up the Lord’s board after the form of an honest table decently covered, in such place of the quire or chancel as shall be thought most meet by their discretion and agreement, so that the ministers, with the communicants, may have their place separated from the rest of the people; and to take down and abolish all other by-altars or tables.”

(3) My third extract shall be taken from Ridley’s letter to Bishop Hooper when they were both in prison, expecting death. It is a remarkable letter, when we remember that the two famous Reformers had once differed much about vestments. (Parker Society’s edition, p. 355):—

“My dearly beloved brother and fellow-elder, whom I reverence in the Lord, pardon me, I beseech you, that hitherto, since your captivity and mine, I have not saluted you by my letters: whereas, I do indeed confess, I have received from you (such was your gentleness) two letters at sundry times, but yet at such times as I could not be suffered to write unto you again; or if I might have written, yet was I greatly in doubt, lest my letters should not safely come unto your hands. But now, my dear brother, forasmuch as I understand by your works, which I have yet but superficially seen, that we thoroughly agree and wholly consent together in those things which are the grounds and substantial points of our religion, against the which the world so furiously rageth in these our days, howsoever in time past in smaller matters and circumstances of religion, your

wisdom and my simplicity (I confess) have in some points varied: now, I say, be you assured, that even with my whole heart (God is my witness) in the bowels of Christ, I love you, and in truth, for the truth's sake which abideth in us, and (as I am persuaded) shall by the grace of God abide with us for evermore. And because the world, as I perceive, brother, ceaseth not to play his pageant, and busily conspireth against Christ our Saviour with all possible force and power, exalting high things against the knowledge of God, let us join hands together in Christ; and if we cannot overthrow, yet to our power, and as much as in us lieth, let us shake those things, not with carnal, but with spiritual weapons; and withal, brother, let us prepare ourselves to the day of our dissolution; whereby, after the short time of this bodily affliction, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall triumph together with Him in eternal glory."

(4) My last extract shall be taken from Ridley's farewell letter to the prisoners for Christ's cause. (Parker Society's edition, p. 425):—

"Why should we Christians fear death? Can death deprive us of Christ, which is all our comfort, our joy, and our life? Nay, forsooth. But contrary, death shall deliver us from this mortal body, which loadeth and beareth down the spirit, that it cannot so well perceive heavenly things, in the which so long as we dwell, we are absent from God.

"Wherefore, understanding our state in that we be Christians, that if our mortal body, which is our earthly house, were destroyed, we have a building, a house not made with hands, but everlasting in heaven, etc.; therefore we are of good cheer, and know that when we are in the body, we are absent from God; for we walk by faith, and not by clear sight. Nevertheless we are bold, and had rather be absent from the body and present with God. Wherefore we strive, whether we be present at home or absent abroad, that we may always please Him.

"And who that hath true faith in our Saviour Christ, whereby he knoweth somewhat truly what Christ our Saviour is, that He is the eternal Son of God, life, light, the wisdom of the Father, all goodness, all righteousness, and whatsoever is good that heart can desire, yea, infinite plenty of all these, above that man's heart can either conceive or think (for in Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead corporally), and also that He is given us of the Father, 'and made of God to be our wisdom, our righteousness, our holiness, and our redemption;' who (I say) is he that believeth this indeed, that would not gladly be with his Master Christ? Paul for this knowledge coveted to have been loosed from the body, and to have been with Christ, for that he counted it much better for himself, and had rather to be loosed than to live. Therefore these words of Christ to the thief on the cross, that asked of Him mercy, were full of comfort and solace: 'This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise. To die in the defence of Christ's Gospel, it is our bounden duty to Christ, and also to our neighbour. To Christ, 'for He died for us, and rose again, that He might be Lord over all.' And seeing He died for us, 'we also (saith St. John) should jeopard, yea give, our life for our brethren.' And this kind of giving and losing is getting and winning indeed;

for he that giveth or loseth his life thus, getteth and winneth it for evermore. 'Blessed are they, therefore, that die in the Lord;' and if they die in the Lord's cause, they are most happy of all.

"Let us not then fear death, which can do us no harm, otherwise than for a moment to make the flesh to smart; for that our faith, which is surely fastened and fixed unto the Word of God, telleth us that we shall be anon after death in peace, in the hands of God, in joy, in solace, and that from death we shall go straight unto life. For St. John saith, 'He that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.' And in another place, 'He shall depart from death unto life.' And therefore this death of the Christian is not to be called death, but rather a gate or entrance into everlasting life. Therefore Paul calleth it but a dissolution and resolution; and both Peter and Paul, a putting off of this tabernacle or dwell-house, meaning thereby the mortal body, as wherein the soul or spirit doth dwell here in this world for a small time. Yea, this death may be called, to the Christian, an end of all miseries. For so long as we live here, 'we must pass through many tribulations, before we can enter into the kingdom of heave.' And now, after that death has shot his bolt, all the Christian man's enemies have done what they can, and after that they have no more to do. What could hurt or harm poor 'Lazarus, that lay at the rich man's gate'? his former penury and poverty, his miserable beggary, and horrible sores and sickness? For so soon as death had stricken him with his dart, so soon came the angels and carried him straight up into Abraham's bosom. What lost he by death, who from misery and pain is set by the ministry of angels in a place both of joy and solace?

"Farewell, dear brethren, farewell! and let us comfort our hearts in all troubles, and in death, with the Word of God: for heaven and earth shall perish, but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.